

PATENT**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Application No.: 09/948,821
Filing Date: February 4, 2000
Applicant: Lutkus et al.
Group Art Unit: 3627
Examiner: Flemming Saether
Title: Anti-Galling Fastener Inserts
Attorney Docket: 0275M-000273

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

SUPPLEMENTAL RESPONSE

Sir:

Upon investigating the development history for the products covered by the current application, it has become clear that only after extensive experimentation were the Applicants able to manufacture helically coiled fastener inserts from the material covered by the pending claims. In particular, numerous materials were initially identified and evaluated to determine whether fastener inserts having a significant improvement in anti-galling characteristics could be made, while still meeting industry requirements such as torque values. Of all the materials tested, only that of the present claims appeared to be a viable candidate.

However, the material of the present claims is much more brittle than 302/304 type stainless steels and, thus, it was not clear whether useful product could be manufactured.

As set forth in the appended Applicant's Affidavit, dramatic changes to the Applicant's manufacturing process had to be implemented to achieve a commercially viable product. For example, the coiling mandrel had to be significantly modified to accommodate a reduction in the outside diameter of the inserts to allow them to fit in a tapped hole of a substrate. Additionally,

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the coiling speeds had to be reduced as compared to those used for 304 type stainless steels, this reduction in coiling speeds itself being a concern in terms of being able to wind the coils tightly enough to generate an acceptable spring back effect. Not only was an acceptable spring back effect achieved, but a significant and unexpected improvement resulted. Still other obstacles that were overcome to arrive at the product of the present invention are more fully set forth in the appended Affidavit.

In summary, not only was it unclear whether the material of the presently claimed product could meet industry standards for helically coiled fastener inserts, but also it was unclear whether the material could be used in an automated manufacturing process.

Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: May 6, 2002

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